



ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
July 5, 2001

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City of San Diego Green Schools Program and Rancho Bernardo High School Students Help Sherman Heights Community Center Reduce Energy Costs by 35 Percent

SAN DIEGO, CAB The City of San Diego's Environmental Services staff and eight Rancho Bernardo High School students conducted a lighting audit and observed a lighting retrofit at the Sherman Heights Community Center on Wednesday, June 6, 2001 to help reduce the Center's monthly energy use and costs. The students' visit to the center was the final session of the City's Green Schools Program, a seven-course curriculum that is designed as an after-school elective to help students learn about energy conservation methods and the impact of energy use in California.

The students spent time with the Center's Director and the Environmental Services staff evaluating the Center's use of lighting and lighting fixtures and discussing methods for reducing energy consumption. Students recommended a range of strategies to reduce electricity demand from basically turning off lights when not needed more advanced methods of installing energy saving devices and designing an energy management program.

Amtech Lighting experts joined the students in one of the Center's classrooms after the lighting retrofit to demonstrate the replacement of old T-12 florescent bulbs and electronic ballasts with more energy efficient T-8 bulbs and fixtures. The lighting experts dismantled the lighting fixtures and explained safety issues as well as the energy saving benefits resulting from the retrofit.

"Thanks to a public-private partnership forged between the City and the Sony Technology Center-San Diego, the Green Schools program benefited all groups involved," said Richard L. Hays, director of Environmental Services Department. "Sony donated the dollars to help the students purchase energy-efficient lighting fixtures, and the services of Amtech to conduct the lighting retrofit. The students learned about energy conservation and selected the Sherman Heights Community Center. The Center's monthly electricity bill is expected to drop 35 percent. It's truly a win-win situation."

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ADD—Page 2-- City of San Diego Green Schools Program....

Prior to the Community Center lighting retrofit, the Green Schools educational sessions focused on discussions about the correlations between energy use, air pollution and global climate change. The students also conducted an energy audit of their own high school.

“The Green Schools Program is an example of how private companies can contribute to youth programs that benefit their surrounding community and residents,” said Hays. “With similar contributions, the Green Schools Program could potentially benefit hundreds of other students and non-profits that have been heavily impacted by the current energy-supply shortage.”

For more information about the Green Schools program, call Linda Pratt at (858) 492-5088. The City of San Diego’s Environmental Services Department is charged with refuse collection and disposal, recycling and environmentally-sound landfill management to meet the City’s long-term disposal needs. For more information on Environmental Services, visit its web site at <http://www.sannet.gov/environmental-services/>.

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